

## Changes in Health Expectancy in Japan: 1992, 1995, and 1998

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This study examines changes in the health of the Japanese population aged 40 years and over during the 1990's. The changes in health are assessed by several measures of health expectancy estimated using the Sullivan method and data obtained from the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of the People on Health and Welfare conducted in 1992, 1995, and 1998. Institutionalization rates (use of nursing homes) are also estimated using national surveys of the institutionalized population for the same years in order to treat them properly in calculating the health expectancies. One of these health expectancies is active life expectancy. Those who were hospitalized or answered as having assistance to perform at least one ADL activity among 5 ADL's (including bathing, dressing, eating, toileting and walking) available in the surveys are classified as inactive, and the rest as active. Results indicate that life expectancy and active life expectancy increased from 1992 to 1998 for both sexes at all ages 40 years and above. For instance, life expectancy at age 40 increased from 37.7 years in 1992 to 38.7 years for males in 1998. Over the same period, active life expectancy increased from 35.7 years to 36.8 years. The corresponding figures for females are 43.3 years to 45.0 years and 40.4 years to 41.8 years. However, the proportion of active life expectancy to total life expectancy marginally decreased for females but increased slightly for males. This suggests a mixed picture for changes in health by gender in the 1990's. Based on estimated active life expectancy, males' health improved slightly but there was no change, at most, in females health. Another type of health expectancy, healthy life expectancy based on self-rated health indicates that there is no clear trend in health status from 1992 to 1998 for both sexes. However, if we compare only the results of 1992 and 1998, the proportion of healthy life expectancy to life expectancy decreased for both sexes at age 40 and above. Overall people did not feel as healthy in 1998 as they felt in 1992.